

***Working for the  
people and  
communities  
of the 32<sup>nd</sup> District***



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- Capital Budget
- Community and Economic Development and Trade
- Vice-Chair, Select Committee on Environmental Health
- Ecology & Parks

**Washington State Delegate,  
Pacific NorthWest Economic  
Region Delegate Council**



Representative  
**Maralyn Chase**



## 2010 Session Report

*Dear Friends and Neighbors,*

*I'm glad to report that our state budget has weathered the worst of the Great Recession, and is now balanced.*

*Yes, there were disappointments. I wish the revenue crisis had inspired leaders with the courage to finally reform our tax system. As you'll see inside, it was not to be.*

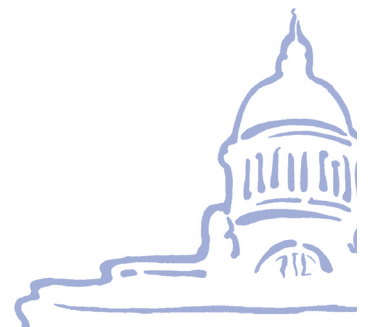
*The 2010 Legislature wisely refused calls for yet another "all cuts" budget that would have further devastated our public schools, universities and services for seniors. If the call for balance had failed, the outcomes would have been far worse than the already unprecedented budget cuts described on page 2.*

*We took good steps to get people back to work. The best way to grow revenues is to encourage job growth and business growth—especially in the small businesses that drive so much of our economy, and we did that by passing the JOBS Act and other measures to boost Washington's economy. Our efforts to expand worker retraining, increase college scholarships and expand middle school career/technical education will also help.*

*If you have questions, comments or suggestions, please feel free to contact my office. I'm grateful for the thousands of emails and hot-line calls we received this session, and for the visits from local citizens who came to Olympia to share concerns. Be sure to let me know if you have an idea for a new law. I'm already readying my 2011 agenda, and would love to hear from you.*

*Sincerely,*

Maralyn





## THE STATE BUDGET—ADDRESSING THE WORST CRISIS IN GENERATIONS

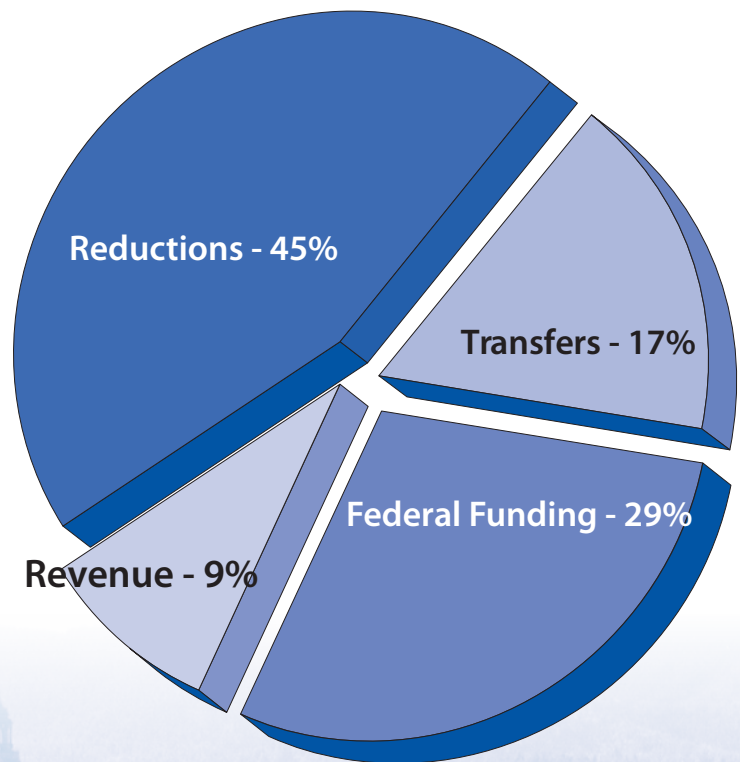
This newsletter is too brief to detail all of the severe budget reductions that were made over the past two years. The related chart shows the reductions in percentage terms. To get a feel for the magnitude of the budget crisis we faced, consider:

- Including the new revenues adopted in April, total state general-fund tax collections this biennium will be an estimated \$250 million *lower* than they were in 2005-07.
- The current budget is \$1 billion *smaller* than the 2007-09 budget—the first time the budget has shrunk in real terms since 1951.
- Despite population growth, there are about 4,100 *fewer* state employees (outside of higher education) now than there were in July of 2008. The number of state employees will continue to shrink as the latest budget reductions take effect.

These numbers do *not* show the harm the revenue crisis has inflicted to our schools, our environment and natural resources, or to our human services for neighbors in need. They don't show the pain of skyrocketing tuitions at our colleges. But these facts do correct the myths that certain right-wing commentators and lawmakers are spewing about the budget.

Would you like more information? Feel free to contact my office. Washington also has an excellent web site to provide citizens with official information about our state budget and revenues: <http://fiscal.wa.gov/>

Combined budget reductions, 2009-11 vs 2007-09	
K-12	-5.4%
Higher Education	-14.7%
Early Learning	-18.0%
Health Care	-14.2%
Long term Care, DD, Mental Health	-4.7%
Corrections and Criminal Justice	-9.5%
Other Human Services	-9.7%
Natural Resources	-20.2%
All Other, including Debt Service	-6.0%



The Legislature made more than \$4.50 in budget cuts for every dollar in new revenues to balance the biennial budget.

## STATE REVENUE POLICY—A BROKEN TAX SYSTEM



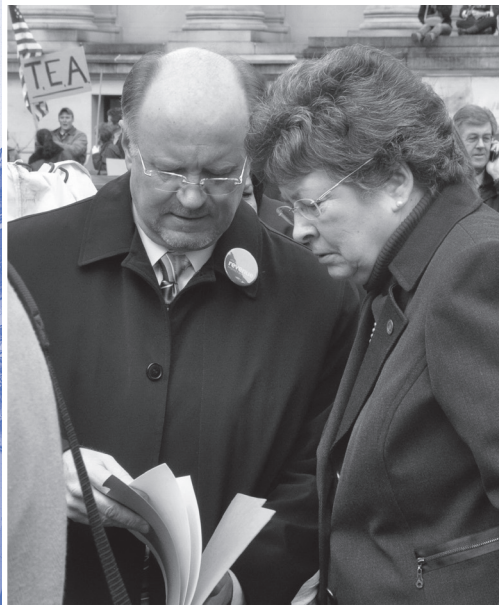
Washington's painful revenue crisis is one more example of the price we all pay for having the nation's most regressive tax system. As the Gates Commission warned, over-relying on property taxes, B&O business taxes and "blue collar" consumption taxes is not only unfair to working families, it also retards needed business and job growth and "causes revenue shortfalls in economic downturns, precipitating destabilizing fiscal crises." How prophetic!

Unfortunately, the new revenue package is mainly more of the same. Raising taxes on cigarettes, bottled water, candy and gum—and temporary increasing taxes on beer, soda pop and service businesses—will save vital services, this time. But the lion's share of these taxes will fall on those who are already bearing the brunt of the recession. I do appreciate that the Legislature agreed to double the

Small Business Tax Credit to help very small businesses weather the storm.

I proposed an income tax this year, but political timidity prevailed and the proposal didn't get a hearing. Now, private citizens have announced that they will propose an income tax for the November ballot. If Bill Gates, Sr. can see why we need to ask the wealthiest Washingtonians to help out by paying a fairer share of taxes, when will lawmakers learn?





Conferring with Rick Bender, President of the Washington State Labor Council

## EDUCATION—MIXED PROGRESS



Everyone agrees education is our top priority, except when it comes to providing adequate funding. The Legislature is still not making the dollars and cents commitment to education that we

need for children, and our future. We did lay the groundwork for long-term funding and policy reforms.

**Race to the Top.** Teachers, principals, the PTA and many others worked together for education reforms that will help us compete for a share of the Obama Administration's "Race to the Top" funding. This unity produced good steps that will increase accountability for under-performing schools, improve outreach to parents, and expand opportunities to recruit outstanding teachers.

**Reforming education funding.** We took strong first steps to implement the Quality Education Council's blueprint for reforming education funding. This included creating a clearer funding model and firm timelines for phasing in *specific* state funding responsibilities for smaller class sizes in grades K-3, school maintenance & operations, and pupil transportation.

**Levy Lid Changes.** Since each school district's levy authority is limited by the total size of their budgets, when the state cuts funding, local schools lose the state dollars and part of their levy authority. This is obviously unfair, so I strongly supported the new law that prevents reduced state funding for I-728 and I-732 from lowering levy lids. It also temporarily raises levy lids by 4 percent to ease the impact of state budget cuts. Our local schools needed this help.

There were other gains in education, too. I'm quite pleased with the increased attention to early learning. Requiring a comprehensive plan for a voluntary program of early learning—as part of basic education—is a very positive step. I feel the same about new laws we enacted to combat bullying and celebrate diversity and the human rights of all people in our schools—we need schools to help build good citizens, and not just a good workforce.

## PUTTING OUR PEOPLE BACK TO WORK

Just two hours before the special session ended, lawmakers passed the JOBS Act I co-sponsored. JOBS stands for Jobs, Opportunity, and Better Schools. I supported it because it would create about 30,000 construction jobs to repair and modernize our public schools and universities, making them more energy-efficient and saving taxpayers \$130 million in electricity bills every year. It would also give our children safer, healthier schools.

Passage of my proposal to double the payback period for conservation loans for energy-efficiency projects—from 10 to 20 years—is another important win-win for jobs and the environment that will put contractors back to work and construction workers back on the job.

I'm also pleased that state colleges will steer more worker retraining funds to programs in aerospace, health care, long-term care, advanced manufacturing, construction, renewable-energy industries. National experts and our local Workforce Development councils say these high-demand fields will offer the greatest opportunities for workers and our state.

## SECURITY FOR OUR FAMILIES — CITIZENS ARE NOT COMMODITIES



You've seen the news accounts of frail seniors who are included in the price of adult family homes, the Fodor Home debacle in Lake Forest Park, and the recurring nightmare of yet another foster child who has been abused, sometimes to death. Real people suffer when DSHS loses its focus. How many more headlines will it take to prove that DSHS has gotten too big for its own good or the public's good?

Privatization isn't the answer. Part of the problem is that life-sustaining services such as long-term care for the elderly and people with disabilities are being viewed as profit-making opportunities rather than as solemn public duties. And as *The Seattle Times* "Seniors for Sale" series showed, DSHS oversight over commercialized care has led to one dangerous oversight after another.

Enough is enough. I've co-sponsored bipartisan legislation to abolish DSHS and transfer its functions to four separate departments that would focus on Economic Services, Medical Assistance, Health and Rehabilitative Services, and Children's Services. Smaller, more focused agencies would provide a level of accountability and a standard of care that has too often been lacking in the DSHS maze.

## PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

Even though we were hamstrung by the budget deficit, we passed good policies that make progress toward our environmental goals.

- The House Environmental Health Committee, where I serve as Vice Chair, helped lead passage of the first bill in the nation to phase out copper in brake pads, which will provide essential protection for the Puget Sound and for salmon.
- We banned the highly toxic bisphenol-A (BPA) in baby bottles and other food and drink containers used by children under age 3. Over 150 studies have warned that this substance threatens children's health



- After years of work, we finally passed a statewide product stewardship program for mercury-containing bulbs and tubes from residential homes.
- We fought successfully to save the Pesticide Incident Reporting System, which monitors exposures to pesticides and chemicals in our environment. We need to know why 1 child in every 160 births is born with autism, and why we have high cancer and Multiple Sclerosis rates.

Of course, there is still more to do. The House passed my bill to make state government a leader in using "green chemistry" cleaning products, but time ran out before it passed the Senate. We'll also have to fight another day to require petroleum producers to help fund the cleanup of toxic runoff into the Sound—the \$50 million we budgeted to help with local storm-water projects was a good start, but only a start.

With Martha Rose, owner of Martha Rose Construction. Martha is a leading expert on sustainable development practices.

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